

FIRST INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON STEREO-ENCEPHALOTOMY (Stereotaxic Surgery). Reprint from "Confinia Neurologica," Vol. 22, No. 3-5, p. 165-396 (1962). Symposium held in Philadelphia, Pa., on October 11-12, 1961, at Temple University Medical Center. Edited by E. A. Spiegel and H. T. Wycis, Philadelphia, Pa. Published by S. Karger A. G., Basel, 1962. 232 pages, 37 figures, 10 tables, \$10.50. American Distributor: Albert J. Phiebig, P. O. Box 352, White Plains, N. Y.

This paper-bound monograph reprints the proceedings of the first international meeting devoted entirely to human stereotaxic surgery. Brought together by the founding fathers of human stereotaxis, E. A. Spiegel and H. T. Wycis, workers from nine countries presented 36 papers encompassing localization of deep structures, stimulation and recording techniques, lesion production and quantitation, and therapeutic results.

Localization procedures presented ran the gamut from unsophisticated techniques to carefully planned two-stage procedures with precise instruments and careful radiographic and physiological controls. Fortunately most essayists gave target coordinates (in millimeters) from x-ray visualized intracranial landmarks, though some failed to realize the importance of visualizing at least three points (or two points and a plane) to determine the location of a point within the volume of the brain.

Stimulation and recording techniques were generally agreed to be valuable neurophysiological adjuncts to localization although widely differing results were reported by the various authors. If greater attention were paid to the known requirements for effective stimulation, many apparent disagreements could be resolved.

A wide variety of lesion producing techniques was described including heat, cold, chemical, radiation, ultrasonic and mechanical methods. A few results on the accurate quantitation of tissue destruction were included, though the need for more work in this field is apparent.

The widest area of agreement seems to have been in the therapeutic value of stereotaxic procedures. All the groups reporting found the method to be of great value, particularly in the therapy of extrapyramidal disorders.

The book suffers from a number of typographical errors, most of which are inconsequential (although some, such as that in the formula on page 338 describing cold lesion size, are unfortunate). In summary this volume conveys well the excitement and promise—as well as the confusion—in the field of human stereotaxis. Although many of the presentations are not adequate to provide a definitive picture of the state of the art, the book is essential reading for those who are engaged in this work or who contemplate such an undertaking.

W. WATSON ALBERTS, Ph.D.

* * *

THE FUNDAMENTAL IDEAS OF MEDICINE—A Brief History of Medicine—J. F. A. McManus, M.D., Professor of Pathology, The Experimental Program of Medical Education, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana. Charles C. Thomas, Publisher, 301-327 East Lawrence Avenue, Springfield, Ill., 1963. 115 pages, \$4.75.

This small monograph summarizes what the author regards as the important philosophies and ideas involving medicine up to current times.

There are nine chapters. The first one notes the uses of history; the second the fact that since more than 3000 years B.C. different ideas and theories have been propounded. The important place of the Hippocratic school is stressed in this section. (While paying great deference to Hippocrates, he does not point out the paradox of our common nonobservance of that part of the oath which calls upon us to teach certain disciples without charge. "I swear by Apollo the physician and Aesculapius . . . that according to my ability

and judgment I will teach them (the offspring of my teacher) this art if they shall wish to learn it without fee or stipulation . . .") In the next few chapters the influence of Thales beginning in 6th century, B.C. is duly noted (the leaders of this school suggested that everything in the world was made of water . . . not too far from fact). Aristotle concluded that shape is determined by function, and of course had great influence on the Alexandrian school. After many years Galileo bursts upon the scene in the 16th century and "changes the conceptual framework in terms of which man investigated the natural world as a whole".

Boerhaave, in the 17th, developed the method of clinical teaching familiar to us today. Haller, the great physiologist, was one of his pupils; another was Cullen, who influenced the Hunter brothers, and through them Bright and Rush. Sydenham in the same century extended this technique of bedside teaching.

In the final section the author points out that "There have been great mistakes (in patient care) and sombre episodes not infrequent in medical history—the horrendous concoctions of the pharmacopoeia, the gallons of blood let in the name of rational therapy . . . and so forth". He quotes Snapper that "Every generation of physicians has overestimated the progress made by medicine in its own time".

There are short biographical notes stretching from Adanson to Wunderlich, and an excellent list of suggested reading for those who would delve more thoroughly into medical history.

Well illustrated and printed; a good bedside table book.

L. HENRY GARLAND, M.D.

* * *

THE BIOLOGY OF MENTAL DEFECT—2nd Edition, (Completely Revised with the assistance of J. M. Berg, M.B., M.Sc., and Helen Lang-Brown)—L. S. Penrose, M.D., F.R.C.P., F.R.S.; with a preface by J. B. S. Haldane, D.Sc., F.R.S. Grune & Stratton, Inc., 381 Park Avenue South, New York 16, N.Y., 1963. 374 pages, \$6.75.

Since this is now a standard work in the field of mental deficiency, this revision is most welcome. In this expanded version new material concerning the genetic problems of mental retardation is very well spelled out. The bibliography, as in previous editions, is excellent.

What is missing, from the American point of view, is a better discussion of the cultural facets of mental deficiency. This subject is only partly covered along with the discussion of those forms of defect that result from mental illness. This does not fully reflect current American thinking either as to the extent of the problem nor its function within society. Otherwise, this book continues to be a standard and highly acceptable text.

HENRY H. WORK, M.D.

* * *

AN ATLAS OF ELECTROCARDIOGRAPHY—Hugo Roesler, M.D., F.A.C.P., Associate Professor of Medicine (Cardiology), Temple University School of Medicine, Philadelphia; and Evan Fletcher, M.D., M.R.C.P., Consultant Physician, Belfast City Hospital, Northern Ireland. The Williams & Wilkins Company, Baltimore 2, Md., 1963. 700 pages, \$28.00.

This Atlas is a comprehensive account of the electrocardiograms of 400 patients with autopsy data on 136. The authors believe that a critical analysis of a large number of tracings correlated with clinical and pathological data is the only way a useful knowledge of clinical electrocardiography can be acquired. This large volume (700 pages) constitutes implementation of that belief.

The book is divided into ten sections, of which the largest (as seems appropriate) is that dealing with myocardial infarction. Each section is preceded by a brief resume. Each electrocardiogram has a detailed interpretation of the limb